

MINUTES
BALTIMORE COUNTY Linking Communities to the Montreal Process
Criteria and Indicators PROJECT

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING
Tuesday, March 3, 2004
Sherwood House, Cromwell Valley Park

Attending:

Bud Chrismer (Baltimore County Rec & Parks); Margaret Clune (Baltimore County Office of Planning); Charlie Conklin (Gunpowder Valley Conservancy); Christine Duce (Baltimore City DPW); Michael DeFillippi and Jo Owen (Watershed Protection Coalition); Scott Kurtzman (Glatfelter Co.); Mel Noland (County Forestry Board); Rich Pouyat (US Forest Service); Rob Prenger (MD DNR); Bob Tichenor (MD Dept. of Ag.); Jeff Wolinski (restoration consultant); Don Outen, Pat Cornman, Rob Hirsch, Bret Sage, Steve Stewart (Baltimore County DEPRM)

Welcome and Agenda Review:

Don Outen opened the meeting at 10 a.m. and welcomed the participants. The agenda for this meeting included discussions of:

1. the revised Issues Paper
2. next steps to getting County Council adoption of the Resolution for forest sustainability as policy using the Montreal Process framework
3. establishing work groups to develop a work plan to implement the MP issues

Announcements:

Don announced that DEPRM recently submitted two grants to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (Chesapeake Bay Small Watershed grants) for the *Growing Home* and the *Rural Residential Stewardship Initiative* projects. These grants will help fund initiatives in support of the Montreal Process project. These projects provide incentives for private landowners to plant trees for a range of ecological functions and benefits.

Rob Prenger announced that the Strategic Forest Lands Assessment for Maryland is now available on CD. He offered to evaluate the assessment for application to our project.

Discussion:

The major topic of discussion was the revisions made to the Issues Paper based on comments received by the Committee and others on the Montreal Process distribution list over the past several months. Don highlighted the major changes, including:

1. adding terminology for "sustainability" and "forest management" (based on input from Pat Cornman and Bret Sage),
2. moving the "Purpose" statement to the front of the Issues Paper,
3. revising the "issues" list for the County's forest resources, following significant discussion by the committee previously,
4. completing the detail narrative for the MP Criteria descriptions regarding application to Baltimore County,
5. clarifying the presentation of forest resource facts or "snapshot" (based on comments by Christine Duce),
6. adding a map of the forest resources of the County, and

7. changing title and header fonts, re-formatting the column sections, and creating a PDF version so as to avoid problems with opening and printing the document.

It was noted that proposed changes to pages 13-14, the Forum Summary, were not made as this was the summary produced previously by Sustainable Measures, Inc.

Don commented that it has been about nine months since the Sustainability Issues and Indicators Forum and expressed that the DEPRM needs to begin work on some detailed programs to respond to the issues identified. It is necessary to conclude the Committee's work on the Issues Paper and present the Resolution to the County Council, as requested by the Steering Committee following the Forum.

Overall, the group appeared to find the revised Issues Paper satisfactory for this purpose. There were some concerns, however, by members of the Watershed Protection Coalition. In particular, Jo Owen expressed concern that only forests categorized as fragmented and unhealthy should be considered for forest products. In response, Don noted that the Issues Paper makes no assumptions or statements about which forested lands should be managed for forest products. She also recommended that the Resolution be moved to the front, to which Don responded that the Resolution can be separated from the Issues Paper as well as be included at the end. Michael DiFillippi perceived that the Issues Paper mixes problems with solutions, a comment not stated previously. After considerable discussion, the majority of the steering committee did not agree. Don reminded everyone that the Issues Paper makes no specific recommendations for solutions to any of the problems identified.

In response to other comments from Jo Owen, a change was made at the recommendation of Margaret Clune to the first "Now therefore be it resolved" phrase of the Resolution to further imply, consistent with the definition of forest management in the Paper, that economic sustainability would be appropriate to specific forest lands under consideration and not necessarily to all forested lands.

Mel Noland commented that each organization at the table could find something with which to disagree in the wording of the Issues Paper but that overall the organizations need to compromise somewhat in order to make progress. Mel further offered that although the Maryland Forestry Association had some problems with the Issues Paper, on balance they were in favor of supporting its immediate submittal to the County Council. Charlie Conklin added that he thought the GVC could live with the content and form of the revised Paper.

There was also some discussion about the kinds of wildlife species that could live in different successional stages in managed forests. Rich Pouyat introduced the concept of adaptive management as a component of ecosystem management.

Hearing no other objections that related to specific statements in the Issues Paper, Don thanked the Committee for their input to date and indicated that he would present the Issues Paper and Resolution to DEPRM Director David Carroll for further action. As discussed previously, the Issues Paper will not include specific endorsements or objections from participants, but everyone will be notified of any opportunity to present testimony. The group inquired about the timeframe for County Council action. Don indicated that while this was in progress, the Committee could continue to meet to scope out the structure of the detailed work plan in response to the issues. This will be the focus of the April meeting.

Next Meeting:

Don announced that the **next meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 6, 2004, at 10:00-12:00** at the Sherwood House, Cromwell Valley Park.

Don noted that there is a conflict with the regular meeting date of the Committee for May. The **May meeting is proposed for Tuesday, May 11, 1:00-3:00 PM** at Sherwood House, Cromwell Valley Park.

Adjournment:

The attendees were thanked for participating, and the meeting was adjourned at 12:30 PM.